

# Farm & Forest

Working together to conserve active farms and forests in King County

May 2001

## Kent Berry Farmer Wins Green Globe!



On April 10, Bob Tidball, owner of the T&M Berry Farm near Kent, was awarded King County's Green Globe Award as a "Leader in Resources Management". This award, presented by County Executive Ron Sims and Kurt Triplett of the County's Department of Natural Resources, recognizes efforts by businesses and individuals to conserve resource lands and promote agricultural or forest management practices that protect the environment.

Bob Tidball has tirelessly promoted environmentally sound farming and farmland preservation in the County for more than 20 years. In 1979 Bob volunteered on the campaign to raise \$50 million for the King County Farmlands Preservation Program. The bond measure was approved, and in 1983 Bob put his eight-acre berry farm into the program, donating more than half of his development rights to the County. When he encouraged neighboring landowners to join the program, five out of a possible eight applied, creating a block of

preserved farmland in an area that continues to face intense pressures for commercial and industrial development.

Bob comes from generations of farmers in South Dakota, Montana and Oregon. He lived and worked on small farms as a youth and earned money for college as a ranch hand in Western Montana. Twenty-five years ago, while working as a Boeing engineer, Bob began farming part time. In 1978 he bought his berry farm in the Green River Valley near Kent, where he grows organic strawberries and raspberries and runs a u-pick operation. Bob also sells berries to restaurants, at roadside stands, and at the Pike Place Market. While starting to market his own crops, Bob became President of Puget Sound Farm Direct Marketing Association and is still on its board.

Over the years, the T&M Berry Farm has employed scores of Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian and Hmong workers as they adjusted to life in America. Today many Ukrainian immigrant families find their lost connection to the land picking berries on Bob's farm. And when harvest nears its end, the field is open to gleaning organizations that pick berries for low-income families and local food banks. The farm is a place to learn as well. Over the past dozen years, Bob has mentored several beginning farmers on his property — one of whom

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## Who Says Money Doesn't Grow on Trees?

### Washington Forest Riparian Easement Program

Washington landowners who want to receive compensation for setting aside riparian forests as fish habitat can take advantage of an opportunity that is the first of its kind in the nation. The Forest Riparian Easement Program (FREP) was established through HB 2091 (Forest and Fish Agreement) in 1999. This bill in-



creased the stream buffer width required to be set aside when a landowner harvests timber. At the same time, it authorized 2.5 million dollars to compensate small landowners for at least 50% of the value of the timber retained in these riparian zones.

The bill defines a "small forest landowner" as a landowner with at least 20 acres, who has not harvested more than 2,000,000 board feet per year for the last three years. These individuals may apply for a FREP at

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## 50 years of Forests and Feathers

Bill and Erin Woods are hard to catch up with. In between biking and birding trips (often to and from Elderhostel programs) they frequently volunteer to promote good forest stewardship. Bill is a forest advisor and Erin serves as secretary for the Washington Farm Forestry Association (WFFA). Their family tree farm near Redmond is a model of forest stewardship.



When Bill and Erin Woods purchased their 20 forested acres on Union Hill 50 years ago, it was a perfect fit: rural, secluded and wonderful bird habitat. They immediately started forest management, harvesting alder, cherry and maple. They had the wood milled locally and used it to panel their home. By 1980 the surrounding area was developing rapidly. Rising taxes led the Woods to enroll their property in the new open-space tax incentive program through King County. In the process they learned of WFFA. Bill and Erin appreciated WFFA's dedication to promoting good forest stewardship and the importance of family tree farms; they became active members.

In 1982, the Woods harvested three acres of trees. They reforested the area themselves, carefully planting about 1200 Douglas fir and western red cedar seedlings. Then in 1993 the Inaugural Day storm hit - seven acres of mature western hemlock and Douglas fir toppled. As Bill says, "It was a real windfall..." He had just retired from Boeing and the proceeds from salvage logging were very timely. The seven acres have been reforested with Douglas fir, western red cedar,

blister rust-resistant white pine, giant sequoia and Sitka spruce.

The Woods' commitment to stewardship is evident as you stroll through their tree farm: diversity in species, age and forest structure; trees carefully pruned to improve wood quality;

trees thinned as needed; tree and shrub trimmings stacked to minimize fire hazard and create wildlife refuge; and noxious weeds removed at first sign. They also have a commitment to habitat, particularly for birds. Bill points out various birdhouses constructed mostly of log trim and gives a history of the changing occupants. Erin points out several birch trees completely ringed by the boring of sapsuckers. Both point out many snags with excavations from pileated, downy and hairy woodpeckers, flickers, sapsuckers and black-capped chickadees.

Bill and Erin are managing their tree farm for the future. They aren't sure what the future holds for the surrounding area, where large homes on small lots have been built around them. They are disappointed that people in the area don't seem to be interested in the long-term commitment needed for responsible forest ownership and management. So they are looking into various strategies to ensure that their tree farm remains an example of a productive family-run forest in the rural area - good for habitat and for family income.



*Tidball from page 1...*

has now converted 19 acres of potential industrial land to an organic farming operation.

Bob Tidball has always been concerned with the environmental effects of farming practices. In 1983, he converted his T&M Berry Farm to "No Spray". He joined the Puget Sound Farm Trust, a non-profit organization that promotes farm preservation and environmentally friendly farming practices, and accepted a position on the board. He also joined the Green-Duwamish Watershed Alliance to promote farming interests in watershed planning, and served on their board. Since December 1999, he has served on a Tri-County committee working to provide common sense solutions for farmers dealing with Endangered Species Act listings in the Puget Sound area.

Bob continues his unflagging work for farming and the environment in many arenas. He makes numerous trips to Seattle and Olympia to testify before the Metropolitan King County Council and the State Legislature on farming issues. His other activities through several organizations and committees are ongoing. According to Bob Gregson, Chair of the King County Agriculture Commission, "Bob has donated thousands of hours of his time, time away from his farm and family, to advocate for farmland protection, farmers and farm families and the agricultural way of life in this very urbanizing area. I can think of no one person who has done more on behalf of these issues."



To learn more about The Green Globe Awards or for information on how you can volunteer or nominate a local landowner, please call  
**Jo Sullivan at 206-296-8361.**

# Updates

## Foot-and-Mouth Alert

Prevention is the best defense against the dreaded Foot-and-Mouth Disease. Humans are not known to be susceptible to Foot-and-Mouth, and no livestock cases have been reported in the United States to date. However, the outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in many countries is of grave concern to livestock owners here.

For more information, call the United States Department of Agriculture at **360-753-9430**, or the Washington State Veterinarian at **360-902-1878**.

For a copy of the Cattle Industry Advisory (applicable to all susceptible livestock), please call KC Livestock Program Coordinator **Laurie Clinton** at **206-296-1471**.

## Farm & Forest CONTACTS

### Forestry

Kathy Creahan 206-205-5621  
Benj Wadsworth 206-296-7805

### Technical Forestry Questions

Bill Loeber 206-296-7821  
Kristi McClelland 206-296-7820

### Farming Questions

Steven Evans 206-296-7824  
Eric Nelson 206-296-1469

### Farmland Preservation Questions

Judy Herring 206-296-1470

### Livestock Questions

Laurie Clinton 206-296-1471  
Rick Reinlasoder 206-263-6566

### Property Tax Incentive Programs

Ted Sullivan 206-205-5170

### Email

firstname.lastname@metrokc.gov



## Livestock Manure

### Waste to Resource

Livestock manure is an underused fertilizer and soil rejuvenator. Before chemical fertilizers came into common use, livestock manure was the primary source of nutrients in crop production. In addition to supplying plant nutrients to soil, manure also improves soil fertility and structure by increasing organic matter and promoting beneficial organisms. Incorporating manure into a field helps reduce erosion by improving soil structure. Manure also improves the soil's water retention capacity, sustaining plants longer into the growing season. It is necessary, however, to have the nutrient content of the manure tested to determine the proper application rate. Improperly applied manure can contaminate runoff to surface waters, causing a variety of water quality problems.



Livestock manure is an often underused resource.



Manure can be put to good use as a soil amendment or fertilizer.

Composting reduces the volume of manure by approximately 50%, making it easier to apply to cropland. Nutrients in composted livestock manure are more stable than those in fresh manure, and are released more slowly and evenly to plants. In addition, composted manure contains fewer weed seeds, pathogens and parasites.

Proper composting also minimizes the risk of contaminating surface and ground water. As with any farm practice, it is important to learn the proper way to manage manure to prevent health risks and adverse environmental impacts. Please call **Rick Reinlasoder**, Livestock Program Specialist at **206-263-6566** for more information on livestock manure composting.

Information here is available in alternate formats upon request.  
Call: Bill Loeber at 206-296-7821. TTY: 1-800-833-6388



## A Message from the Washington Farm Forestry Association

As the economy changes in King County, forest landowners are faced with a multitude of issues from ESA to taxes, while conversion to residential or commercial development goes on around them. Did you know there is a group of private landowners that help raise public awareness of the importance of family tree farms? Did you ever wonder where to get answers to your questions about taxation and regulation?

Washington Farm Forestry Association (WFFA) is a voice for family tree farmers in Washington State. Non-industrial forest landowners own

over 45,000 acres in King County's Rural and Forest Zones. Our mission is to protect the economic viability of the small forest landowner, while providing forest resource benefits such as clean water, clean air, and fish and wildlife habitat. We are prepared to lobby strongly for regulatory flexibility for the small landowner to avoid the demise of forestry as a valid land use.

If you would like to know more about how WFFA can help you, call **360-459-0984**, or write to WFFA, PO Box 7663, Olympia, WA 98507.

### *Easement from page 1...*

a regional office of the Washington Department of Natural Resources (WADNR) when filing a forest practice application.

The WADNR regional offices have foresters available to help small landowners fill out forest practice applications, provide advice on road management plans, explain how the easement works, and assist in preparation of the easement.

The Washington Farm Forestry Association (see article on left) supports the FREP and encourages small forest landowners to participate in the program.

If you would like further information, please call **Boyd Norton**, NW Regional Forester with the Small Forest Landowner Office, at **360-902-1404**.



**KING COUNTY**

### Water and Land Resources Division

Resource Lands and Open Space Section  
201 South Jackson Street, Suite 600  
Seattle, WA 98104

<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/forestry.htm>  
<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/agricult.htm>

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### Interested in Attending a Rural Forestry or Agriculture Commission Meeting?

The **Rural Forestry Commission** meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 10:00 AM - Noon at the Mercer Community Center. For more information, call **Benj Wadsworth** at **206-296-7805**.

The **Agriculture Commission** meets every 2nd Thursday at 4:00 PM at the Mercer Community Center. For more information, call **Eric Nelson** at **206-296-1469**.



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